

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, JA

SUBJECT: ISHIHARA FORMALLY ANNOUNCES CANDIDACY IN TOKYO
GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION

REF: TOKYO 2454

SUMMARY: ON MARCH 6 SHINTARO ISHIHARA FORMALLY ANNOUNCED
THAT HE WILL BE CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATE IN APRIL 13 TOKYO
GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION. REFORMIST INCLUMBENT RYOKICHI
MINOBE STILL INSISTS HE WILL NOT SEEK REELECTION, BUT
MANY OBSERVERS THINK THAT IN END HE WILL DECIDE TO RUN.
WHATEVER HIS DECISION, REFORMIST SQUABBLING HAS DEFINITELY
IMPROVED CHANCES FOR LDP TO RECAPTURE TOKYO GOVERNOR'S
POST. END SUMMARY.

1. ON MARCH 6 SHINTARO ISHIHARA FORMALLY ANNOUNCED THAT
HE WILL BE CANDIDATE IN APRIL 13 TOKYO GUBERNATORIAL
ELECTION. LIVELY AND IN HIGH SPIRITS, ISHIHARA TOLD
TOKYO PRESS CONFERENCE THAT IT WAS HIS MISSION TO REVITALIZE
AND RENOVATE TOKYO ADMINISTRATION WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS IN
STATE OF NEAR COLLAPSE AFTER YEARS OF INEPT AND IDEOLOGICALLY
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MOTIVATED REFORMIST CONTROL. HE THEN OUTLINED REFORM

PROPOSALS AIMED AT OVERCOMING CITY'S CURRENT FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES, AT IMPROVING PUBLIC EDUCATION AND HOUSING, AT BETTER PREPARING CITY TO COPE WITH MAJOR DISASTERS, AND AT DEALING WITH POLLUTION. HE ALSO PROMISED TO WORK FOR IMPROVED SOCIAL WELFARE MEASURES.

2. FOLLOWING PRESS CONFERENCE, ISHIHARA CALLED ON PRIME MINISTER MIKI TO REPORT HIS DECISION TO RUN AND TO SOLICIT LDP COOPERATION IN HIS PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR TOKYO ADMINISTRATION. HE ALSO PAID CALLS ON KOMEITO AND DSP LEADERS SEEKING THEIR SUPPORT. ALL OF THIS ACTIVITY GENERATED SUBSTANTIAL MEDIA COVERAGE IN WHICH ISHIHARA CAME ACROSS AS VIGOROUS, YOUTHFUL AND FULL OF CONFIDENCE.

3. MEANWHILE, INCUMBENT GOVERNOR RYOKICHI MINOBE TOLD PRESS THAT HE WAS GREATLY DISTRESSED AT PROSPECT OF BEING SUCCEDED IN OFFICE BY ISHIHARA. HE SAID HE WAS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED BECAUSE ISHIHARA ADVOCATED AMENDMENT OF ARTICLE NINE OF CONSTITUTION AND BECAUSE HE FAVORED INTRODUCTION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS INTO JAPAN. NEVERTHELESS, MINOBE AGAIN DECLARED THAT HE WOULD NOT SEEK REELECTION AND THAT HE HOPED REFORMIST FORCES WOULD FIND APPROPRIATE CANDIDATE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

4. APPROPRIATE CANDIDATES, HOWEVER, ARE IN SHORT SUPPLY, AND JSP, SOHYO, AND VARIOUS "CITIZENS GROUPS" ARE STILL CONCENTRATING EFFORTS ON CONVINCING MINOBE THAT HE SHOULD RETRACT HIS EARLIER DECISION NOT TO RUN. AT SAME TIME, IN RELATED EFFORT, THEY ARE TRYING TO WORK OUT SOME FORMULA WHICH WILL, AT LEAST FOR TIME BEING, PERMIT JSP-JCP DIFFERENCES ON DOWA PROBLEM TO BE SET ASIDE AND ELICIT COMMUNIST BACKING FOR PRESENT GOVERNOR. SO FAR, COMMUNISTS HAVE NOT BUDGED, AND TIME IS RUNNING OUT SINCE FILING DATE FOR GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES IS MARCH 19. JCP REBUFFED JSP PROPOSAL EARLIER THIS WEEK FOR BILATERAL MEETINGS OF OPPOSITION PARTIES' SECRETARIES-GENERAL. JCP, HOWEVER, HAS SHOWN INTEREST IN JAPAN DEMOCRATIC JURIST ASSOCIATION PROPOSAL FOR "SUMMIT CONFERENCE" OF POLITICAL AND LABOR GROUPS ORIGINALLY INVOLVED IN MINOBE CAMPAIGN ORGANIZATION. JSP AND SOHYO LEADERS ARE REPORTEDLY CONSIDERING THIS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IDEA.

5. COMMENT: ISHIHARA, WITH HIS ANNOUNCEMENT, HAS CAPTURED SHARE OF MEDIA ATTENTION WHICH IN RECENT WEEKS HAS FOCUSED ON MINOBE AND QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT IN END HE WILL DECIDE TO SEEK REELECTION. ISHIHARA APPEARS TO HAVE MADE GOOD START, BUT STILL HAS PROBLEMS OF HIS OWN, INCLUDING YET UNRESOLVED QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT HE WILL BE ABLE

TO GAIN DSP-DOMEI BACKING. AS FOR MINOBE, MANY OBSERVERS
THINK AND LDP PARTY PROS TELL US THAT GOVERNOR STILL
INTENDS TO BE CANDIDATE AND IS SIMPLY PLAYING ROLE IN
ACT DESIGNED TO FORCE COMMUNISTS TO COME OUT IN HIS FAVOR.
OTHER INFORMED OBSERVERS ARE EQUALLY CONVINCED THAT MINOBE
MEANS WHAT HE SAYS AND THAT THE JCP, WHATEVER ADVERSE
CONSEQUENCES MAY BE FOR REFORMISTS IN GENERAL, WILL NOT
YIELD ON DOWA ISSUE. HOWEVER, ALL THIS TURNS OUT - AND
WE SHOULD KNOW SOON - JSP-JCP IMBROGLIO HAS DEFINITELY
IMPROVED CHANCES FOR CONSERVATIVES TO REGAIN TOP OFFICE
IN JAPAN'S FIRST CITY.
HODGSON

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